

## PULPIT AT S. BENEDETTO, SUBIACO.



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THE monastery of S. Benedetto is situated about a mile from Subiaco, and is a very irregular building, owing to the steep and rugged form of the rock on which it is built. It was founded about A.D. 450, but the present buildings are of course much later, and date from various periods. There are two chapels at different levels: in the upper one, which dates about 1070, is the pulpit given in the engraving. It is executed in marble, and the details of the enrichment show a reminiscence of classic ornament, like most of the works of that period. The walls of the chapel are covered with paintings and elaborate borders of polychrome ornament, but the pulpit is without any colour, and forms a pleasing contrast.

C. F.

## FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

*Royal Academy of Belgium.*—Class of Fine Arts.—Sitting of 27th June last.—We perceive that the plan of uniting all departments of higher instruction into one body corporate, has been carried out in Belgium; and the proceedings of the Academy of Fine Arts are reported with a sort of parliamentary appearances. At the above sitting, the Home Secretary of State informed the Academy, that 5 per cent. of the entrance fees and sale of catalogues of the exhibition of 1851 will be reserved for the general fund of Belgian artists, and 3 per cent. placed at the disposal of the directing commission of this exhibition.—Report read on the subject proposed for prize: "What were the transformations which the base and capitals of

columns have undergone in the succession of different architectural styles, and what were the reasons of these transformations." Five commissioners were selected for the adjudication of this prize. M. Melsens, member of commission, named for answering an inquiry made by the Secretary of State concerning "the best method of cleaning statues," spoke on the experiments undertaken for effecting the object in view. The further proceedings related to other branches of art.

*Improvements, Brussels.*—Our Belgian neighbours seem to feel, that all well-directed activity engenders new activity, tantamount to value and money. The faubourg Schaerbéek-Brussels has, of late, assumed quite another appearance, and the part near the north terminus possesses some very airy and healthy blocks of houses. In the centre a new church of Byzantine style is rising, which, being in a straight line with the Rue Royale, can also be seen from the Porte de Schaerbéek. With a view to salubrity (*assainissement*), a new street will be opened towards the part of the Rue des Palais.

*Exhibition of the Rhenish Art Union.*—This important art-association dates from the year 1836, when delegates from Darmstadt, Carlsruhe, Mannheim, Strassburg and Mainz, met at Heidelberg, for combining their forces into one focus of activity. At that time the school of Düsseldorf was at its apogee, and even the first year's produce for art-work sold, amounted to 23,000 florins. There, amongst many inferior capacities, shone nascent and even great talents. Soon, however, the interest and the worth of the exhibitions were on the decline, and although the committee declared that "their

scope was not to serve mediocrity, but true art, the representatives of that true art had successively retired from the contest: they did not require any more patronage or orders, they were overwhelmed therewith. The triennial, instead of annual exhibitions was proposed, but declined, for not "spoiling the fair to mediocrity." Thus the fatal word *Marasmus senilis* (*juvenilis*?) has been uttered by some German art-critics; a fact which cannot escape the chronicler of art-events. The exhibition at Darmstadt, opened on the 5th of June, contains 299 articles. With the exception of some sketches of the late scene painter Schilbach, and two galvanographies of Le Schöninger, they contain nothing worthy of record.

*Conservatory of Arts and Trades, Paris.*—This institution is successively acquiring a great development, and has been compared, not improperly, to a working cyclopædia of arts and trades. A new gallery has just been opened to the public, situate on the ground-floor, and lighted by windows from the garden of the former convent. The gallery comprises machines relating to textile art and their various products, as well as models of telegraphs, hydraulic motors of all kinds, presses for coining, gasometers, &c. The conservatory counts already fifteen galleries, thus reorganised by their talented present keeper, Colonel Morin. The old refectory of the convent will contain the rich library of arts and trades, having undergone a perfect restoration. It is a work of Pierre de Mortier, the famous mason of the times of St. Louis. Very fine columns support the Ogive vault, richly decorated with mouldings; and be-